

WATER ALLOCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION/OUTREACH/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING
May 12, 2003

Members Present:

Sandra Whitehouse
Tom Sandham
Meg Kerr

Members Absent:

Mary Anne Barry
Sen. Susan Sosnowski
Chip Young

Water Resources Board Staff:

Connie McGreavy

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Dr. Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Sandham moved to approve the April meeting minutes with Ms. Kerr seconding the motion. On a voice vote, the minutes were approved.

III. ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. Revision of Educational Brochure for the Integrated Water/Wastewater Committee

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Report from Committee Members on Tasks

The committee discussed the need for a development person to sit down and write grants. Ms. McGreavy stated that the Joint Advocacy & Funding Committee would work with the Education Committee to help find money do advocacy. Regarding public outreach and education, the idea is to get the public prepared for water allocation and make the message understandable. The focus has to be on the short term. At the end of the process, the committee will recommend legislation as well as educate the General Assembly and the public. Regarding media contacts, Dr. Whitehouse reported that Peter Lord from the Providence Journal has an intern available for assignment. Dr. Whitehouse has been forwarding articles to him. She will follow up with other students available through the Metcalf Institute. Ms. McGreavy suggested that, for the summer, Mr. Lord could be contacted to cover some type of event, such as a success story for water reuse. Other ideas include the following:

- Healthy Landscapes – North Kingstown's program on sustainable landscaping could be presented using model homes. Alyson McCann at URI is the contact for this. The Rain Barrel distribution program is another possibility.

- The Providence Journal's series, "Paying Your Bills" presents an angle for coverage, and the impact of water reuse on cost reduction.

Ms. McGreavy asked whether the proposed residential development in Charlestown includes an affordable housing element. Ms. Kerr noted that this could be a good project for an intern. The contact people include Kate Waterman of the Charlestown Town Council, Harriet Allen, who has been active on the affordable housing legislation issues, and the Washington County Regional Planning Council's water subcommittee. Ms. McGreavy reported that Board staff would introduce the water allocation program at a workshop presented by the RI Rivers Council and the Northern RI Chamber of Commerce.

Discussion moved to the Integrated Water/Wastewater Committee's brochure. Education Committee members felt that the brochure was informational, but it did not include action steps. Committee members felt there were three or four target audiences such as: golf courses (there are between four and six courses near existing wastewater treatment facilities), nurseries, municipal government and facilities that use water for industrial cooling. Clarification was made that nurseries on Aquidneck Island rely on public water supply. . Mr. Sandham felt that trucking water is not the answer. The members discussed the suitability of a letter versus a brochure for the mass market. Dr. Whitehouse suggested sending a letter without a brochure for now, since the brochure may be premature, and then calling businesses that might provide a good educational demonstration of water reuse. Ms. Kerr believed action steps are needed for users; she will contact Dr. Art Gold for information on what URI-CE has already done regarding brochures, especially for a rain barrel promotion or other mass market event. Mr. Lord could write about the benefits of such programs in a news story. Ms. McGreavy felt that a rain barrel program could be done as early as this summer. Mr. Sandham thought that such a system could be expanded using water storage tanks for lawn irrigation.

Regarding follow-up on business mailing lists, Dr. Whitehouse stated that she would purchase the PBN Book of Lists for the State House Library. Ms. McGreavy reported that education messages could be distributed through list serves for the Narragansett Bay Project, South County Watersheds Partnership, Save The Bay, RI Rivers Council, and URI's "Fish List" (fishermen). Ms. Kerr also suggested Jeff DiCenzo, who has organized an association of conservation districts. She will check with him regarding a list serve, email distribution list or newsletter. Ms. Kerr added that The Nature Conservancy also had a list of Land Trusts.

Regarding contact with freelance media consultants, Mr. Sandham reported that Bill Rodrigues with the Providence Journal charges \$50/hour. He will put a package together for a media strategy. Mr. Sandham estimated that Mr. Rodrigues would spend between 3-6 hours attending meetings. Ms. McGreavy suggested talking to Jan Reitsma, DEM Director, regarding funding. Mr. Ken Payne may be another person to talk to about this. Mr. Sandham suggested we invite Mr. Rodrigues to a meeting, and that maybe he would write the grant. Dr. Whitehouse thought it would be wise to ask

Chip Young to come to the next meeting, which could be held at URI. Ms. Kerr will make the arrangements.

Ms. Kerr suggested looking to the RI Foundation for a grant, but noted that they will not fund publications, and they are very choosy. The event or project would have to be clearly defined for a mini-grant; she suggested \$5000 grants. Dr. Whitehouse suggested finding a business to contribute funding, such as Nunes Corp., a residential developer, or golf course developer, Peter DeSavory. Ms. Kerr and Mr. Sandham suggested water-bottling companies, such as the one on Aquidneck Island, though that one might be too small. Dr. Whitehouse suggested the committee look at Save the Bay's annual report to reveal potential corporate sponsors.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VI. AJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Urso

Date

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